



RIVEREAST

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One of the changes RHAM students will see when they return to school next Wednesday is the presence of a police cruiser – and a school resource officer to go with it. Earlier this month, the Board of Education approved a contract with the Town of Hebron that will bring Hebron Police Officer Ricardo Martinez to the school as the new resource officer; it's a position the school hasn't had since 2010.

Changes on Tap as RHAM Schools Start

by Geeta S. Sandberg

Between a new school resource officer, a change in the high school schedule, the start of the Inquiry Academy at the middle school, and the introduction of Chromebooks for all seventh-graders, freshmen and sophomores, there's a number of new things on tap for the 2016-17 school year at the RHAM middle and high schools.

The Board of Education approved a contract with the Town of Hebron earlier this month that will bring a resource officer to the district – it'll be the first time the RHAM schools have had such a position since 2010, when the state made a budgetary decision to suspend the SRO program (which at the time featured state troopers).

High School Principal Scott Leslie said Wednesday, "I think the resource officer is going to be invaluable in terms of helping us maintain safe traffic patterns in the morning and after school, and during the school day provide a sense of security and another resource for students and teachers."

The position has been filled by Hebron Police Officer Ricardo Martinez, who spent 20 years working with the Hartford Police Department prior to his partial retirement. He became

a Hebron police officer in 2014.

Martinez said this week – his second in the new role – he felt comfortable becoming the school resource officer at RHAM since he'd spent five years in the same position with Hartford schools.

His hope, he shared, "is to be able to embrace the kids and create relationships with the kids and kind of become one with them, if you will, and hopefully curtail any negative behavior."

The long-term goal, he continued, "is to make sure that these kids graduate."

Along with the new SRO, Leslie also mentioned a change in scheduling: rather than seven periods, the school day now has eight, meant to allow for an increase in teacher collaboration. Teachers will continue to teach five classes, and students will continue to take up to seven, but the additional period means every teacher and student will be assigned a full 45-minute lunch period instead of the 25 minutes they'd had previously.

Lunch will continue to last for 25 minutes which will give teachers the remaining 20 minutes to collaborate. Meanwhile, students will

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New Year Brings New Grade Configurations

by Elizabeth Regan

In Portland, second-grade teacher Justin Gervais settled into his new classroom at Gildersleeve School this week after having spent 11 years at Valley View School, where he was part of a unique and festive culture devoted to the needs of the town's youngest students.

Gervais organized the room with a focus on creating cozy spaces where kids can work.

"We do a lot of movement in second grade; [it's] not all working at their desks," he said. "So we have a small desk area and a lot of space where they can spread out."

That's just one part of the Valley View tradition Gervais and the district's four other second-grade teachers will be taking with them as they transition from High Street to Main Street.

Another key component revolves around communication among the entire school community.

"I think we've been very open at our old school with communicating about things we think need to be focused on," Gervais said. "We hope to bring that here so that, when we see something we think can improve the students' experience, we can hopefully get that accomplished."

The move was set in motion when plans to demolish portable classrooms at Valley View School made it necessary to restructure the grading configuration in the town's two lower elementary schools.

Back when the seven modular units were first installed, the idea was to use them for about two to three years. That was almost 30 years

ago.

Then a directive from the Board of Education to demolish the modular units came down and last year's first-graders became the final class in the makeshift rooms prone to drafts and leaks.

Those same students are moving on to Gildersleeve School as second-graders, instead of spending another year at Valley View.

The reconfigured Valley View School will serve preschool through grade one. Second-, third- and fourth-grade students will attend Gildersleeve School. There is no change at Brownstone Intermediate School, where grades five and six are housed.

Superintendent of Schools Philip O'Reilly and Gildersleeve Principal Eileen Katz introduced the transition last spring in a four-minute video available on YouTube. The video, titled "A New Journey: Second Grade Transition to Gildersleeve School," was created by Gildersleeve parent Abbi Nori-Nelson.

O'Reilly called the portable units expensive to maintain and said "it's clear that spending money on these portables does not make sense anymore."

Katz said that while things like curriculum, report cards and many traditions will stay the same, the "biggest change for students will be that they're coming to Gildersleeve a year earlier than they would have anyway."

Parents spoke at a meeting of the Board of Education in December to emphasize the importance of maintaining the unique Valley View

culture they believe fosters a welcoming atmosphere through activities and celebrations geared toward young students.

A transition committee of administrators, teachers and parents set out early this year to create a comprehensive plan guiding the demolition and the move to new space in permanent classrooms.

Katz said on Tuesday that communication was the key to getting parents to support the change.

She described holding informational meetings on multiple days at different times to give as many parents as possible a chance to learn about the transition plan and to give input. When the moving crew arrived at Gildersleeve in June with furniture and supplies from the modular units, she took photos and sent them out in a news blast to parents.

The YouTube video, which was another way to get the word out, had garnered 413 views as of Wednesday. It can be found on the PortlandConn channel devoted to town meetings, events and personalities.

With about nine months of preparation completed, furniture from the portables has been moved into colorful classrooms in an underutilized wing of Gildersleeve School. Lockers that used to line the walls of the modular units atop unsightly, patched flooring have found a home in a hallway lit by a bright courtyard.

Changes are also visible outside, where parents and busses drop off the students and pick them up.

An island at the entrance of the school was moved closer to the road with arrows guiding visitors and staff into the side parking lot. Katz explained parents will drop off their children in a new cut-out in front of the bus loop, where teachers will be stationed to help them out of the cars and into the school.

"We're trying to eliminate as much as we can the incoming traffic and busses competing for the same area," she said.

A fresh coat of paint on the parking spaces and more signs help ensure everyone knows where they're supposed to be.

The Board of Education is currently investigating options for a more comprehensive makeover and safety upgrade of driveway, parking lot and student drop-off areas.

A conceptual design created by Nathan L. Jacobson & Associates, a civil and environmental engineering firm, shows a bus drop-off loop in the front and a parent drop-off loop on the side of the school.

Katz said the pavilion and playscape would be moved behind the school as part of the proposal.

The school board will be bringing the idea to the Long Range Planning Committee and the Board of Selectmen to talk about possible funding options, according to O'Reilly.

The engineering firm provided preliminary cost estimates of \$1.45 million for the project. O'Reilly said only projects associated with the construction or renovation of a school building

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be able to use the rest of the period to finish homework, get extra help, go to a math or writing lab, or take a breather.

“We’re hoping it’s productive time for students, but it may be time for them to catch their breath a little bit. And then, for teachers, it’s that collaboration,” Leslie stated.

In addition, Leslie mentioned every freshman and sophomore student will be assigned a Chromebook they’ll be able to use for the duration of their high school career.

“That will allow them to have access to text materials, to teacher websites, to assignments, and some students will be able to submit all of their work digitally and receive it back digitally,” he said. “So it really kind of helps move us forward in that digital realm. Then, next year the plan would be to have all four grades with Chromebooks.”

Over at the middle school, eighth-graders were given Chromebooks last year, and every seventh-grader will now receive one as well.

In addition this year, the Inquiry Academy will begin, offering personalized learning to 45 seventh-graders who applied to participate. The academy, meant for students who are individually motivated and self-directed learners, features interdisciplinary instruction and projects based on student interest.

Middle School Principal Mike Seroussi explained, “The kids range in ability from regular math to Algebra I. Instruction is interdisciplinary but also differentiated so it meets the needs of each kid; kids can focus on different interests, and there’s a genius hour first thing in the morning for students to work on their own projects of interest that will show teachers they’ve met the skills or standards they need to meet for whatever content area they’re working on.”

Lois Donato, one of the teachers in the academy, said Wednesday, “We hope to build a com-

munity of sharing and learning and collaboration. That’s really what it’s about; to get these kids to feel so comfortable they feel comfortable taking risks.”

The teachers, meanwhile, will provide “guidance and a foundation,” she added.

Along with the above, Seroussi shared he was planning to hold regularly-scheduled meetings to discuss initiatives and other items related to the school starting in October – including standards-based grading, the implementation of which was postponed due to concern from parents.

“There’s a lot of misconceptions around standards-based grading and hopefully we can address that this year, what the benefits are and things like that,” Seroussi said.

Speaking of the year as a whole, he stated “I’m looking forward to another successful year.”

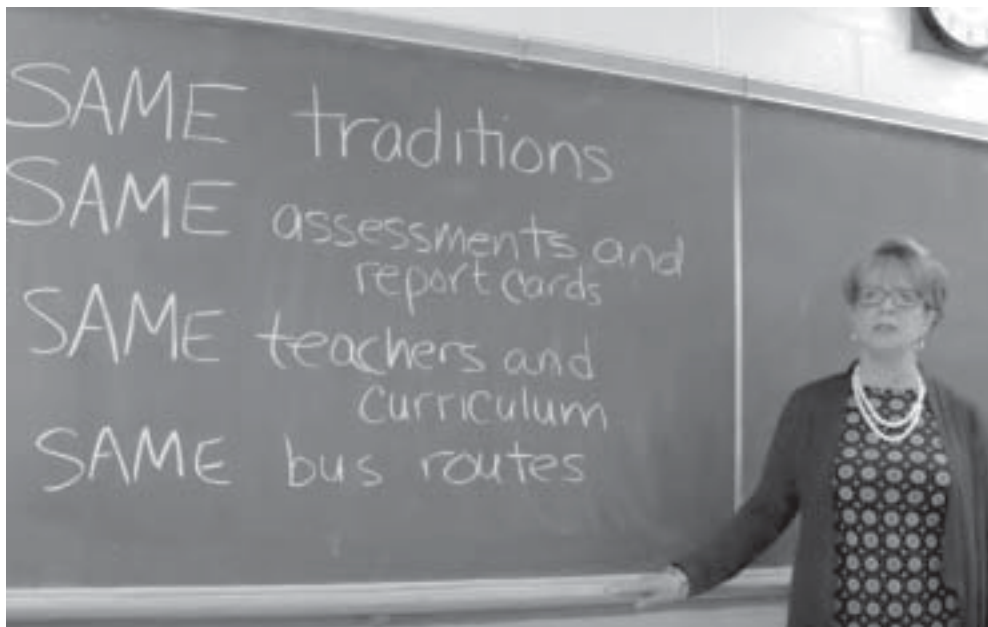
Seroussi added, “I’m also looking forward to watching the Inquiry Academy grow. It’s one of those things where it’s easy to talk about it, but now you want to see the end result.”

As for Leslie, he too was excited about seeing the impact some of the changes would make.

“I’m always looking forward to a really positive year,” he said. “This year I’m particularly interested to see how the access to Chromebooks begins to really change the way that instruction and teaching and learning take place. ... And I’m excited to see how playing with time, again, enhances teaching and learning by providing teachers time to collaborate and students with that additional time.”

He concluded, “I think we’re putting some interesting things in place and I’m hopeful they’re going to enhance the education of all our kids.”

School starts next Wednesday, Aug. 31.



Gildersleeve School Principal Eileen Katz said she looks forward to an infusion of fun and enthusiasm when the inaugural class of second graders arrives on the first day of school. The school, which previously housed only third and fourth grade students, took on the additional grade level after decades-old modular classrooms at Valley View School were demolished.

New Year cont. from Front Page

are eligible for reimbursement from the state.

O’Reilly emphasized the parking lot plan is in its preliminary stages and any designs or cost estimates are purely conceptual.

Now that the physical groundwork has been laid for adding the second grade to Gildersleeve School, Katz said it’s time to look at how the community will carry over the Valley View traditions that are important to parents and stu-

dents.

“As we move through the year now, our goal is going to be to identify which of those we feel strongly we need to hold onto, which we can meld and blend into a new model, and which are things that kind of move to the side now as we develop a new way of thinking and operating,” Katz said.

Observations & Ruminations

by Mike Thompson

A few weeks ago, I was in my local Stop & Shop picking up various essentials when I happened to spot an interesting-looking summer-themed variety pack of beers from Samuel Adams. It wasn’t just Sam’s standard Summer Ale; there were several different kinds of beers in there – many of which I’d never heard of.

I was intrigued – though, for reasons I can’t quite recall at the moment, not intrigued enough to actually pick up the 12-pack. I figured I’d get it another time.

Big mistake when it comes to summer beers in August, however.

As it seems to do every summer, the latter half of August snuck up on me this year. It finally hit me last week – and, as I know from past experience the fall beers start to get rolled out in August, I knew the clock was ticking if I wanted that summer-themed 12-pack (which I’d already mostly forgotten about, but once I realized that I might not be able to buy, I of course *needed to have*). In fact, the clock may have already struck 12. But I figured I’d give it a try.

So last Friday afternoon, since I was up in the Buckland area of Manchester anyway, I thought I’d swing by Total Wine & More – a national chain of package stores – and see if it had the beer still. As a friend of mine later told me, that was my big blunder. A large chain like that probably switched over the fall beers as soon as they became available. Indeed, while the store clerk knew what I was talking about, there wasn’t a single summer variety pack to be found – while there were Octoberfests and pumpkin ales aplenty.

I knew my drive home would take me past another package store, this one a fairly large family-owned one. I asked the friendly staff member if he had any left, and he told me there were two 12-packs remaining when he got into work this morning, but they’d both been sold.

“They both were sold since this morning” were the magic words. Knowing there had been two 12-packs in the store mere hours before gave me hope; surely, there must be some package store in town that had at least one remaining, if this one – one of the more popular package stores in town – were in possession of two that day. Perhaps a smaller one, one a little less frequented, might yield pay dirt (pay beer?).

All this for beers that I’d mostly never even had before. But now, knowing I had been so close, it was a challenge. The hunt was on. The beers may very well be lousy – although, knowing Sam Adams, they probably wouldn’t have been – but, doggone it, I was going to find them.

My drive from there took me past still

another package store before I reached home, this one a smaller shop, so I’d give that a whirl. No dice.

No worries. By the time I returned home it was nearing the dinner hour, and I had a hankering for some fried chicken – Cheek’s Chicken & Waffles to be precise. (If ever you find yourself in Manchester, I highly recommend heading over to the corner of Center and Adams streets and checking it out. It’s the best take-out chicken in town. Heck, one of the best take-out meals in town period.)

Anyway, I knew that on my way to Cheek’s I’d pass at least three more package stores – did I mention Manchester has a lot of package stores? – and that was just on the way to the restaurant. If I needed to expand the search radius, I would. (After I ate, of course.)

So I went to one store. Nope, no dice. In that same plaza is a Stop & Shop, so I figured I’d try there. Perhaps not surprisingly, I had a similar experience as at Total Wine. Almost everything was autumn beers. Keep in mind, last Friday was a pretty warm day, and we’d just come off an unbelievably lengthy string of borderline-extreme heat and humidity. The last thing I could picture myself doing was choking down a thick, heavy Octoberfest. Yet, there they were.

And my summer variety pack was nowhere to be found.

So I tried another, on my way to Cheek’s. I walked in, headed to the back with the beer, and – voila! – there was a Samuel Adams summer variety 12-pack. I immediately scooped it up. As I walked down the aisle, beaming, 12-pack in hand, I passed a store clerk, and told him I’d been to five different stores before I found this 12-pack.

“Oh yeah, we have lots of those,” he replied.

So it took a mini-tour of Manchester package store country – and some resolve in the face of that little voice in my head who kept saying “forget it man, it’s only beer!” – but my quest had been victorious.

Moral of the story? Never give up.

Moral of the story for the beer companies? Stop pushing your fall beers in August. Nobody wants to deal with that stuff yet. It’s still summer; let people enjoy it.

Oh, and just how was the beer, you might wonder? I have no clue; I haven’t tried it yet. But, with 90s in the forecast again for this weekend, I’m sure I’ll test one or two out.

See you next week.

Colchester Innovation to Spread District-Wide

by Julianna Roche

With the future of jobs changing and a student population that's diversifying, innovation will be a main focus district-wide this year, said Superintendent of Schools Jeff Mathieu, who is calling the initiative *The Innovation Nation!*

"The Colchester vision promises the 2016-17 school year to be one of the most exciting and stimulating in the history of our district," he added. "For the first time we are accepting multiple tuition students from other towns."

According to Mathieu, the initiative focuses on developing students into problem-solvers and leaders, as well as making learning more personalized and preparing "each of our students to face the challenges of his or her tomorrow."

And this isn't just a one-year initiative. When the new William J. Johnston Middle School opens in the fall of 2017, Mathieu said, it will have a new "Innovations" course for students, which is designed to promote creative thinking.

Colchester Elementary School Principal Judy O'Meara added that due to a school-wide gift from their Parent Teacher Organization (PTO), the school was able to purchase items to put in the new "Innovations Room," including two iPads, six Chromebooks, and "tech tubs" to protect and hold the iPads.

According to O'Meara, student learning will be focused on a "personally-relevant curriculum where problem solving, communication, and critical thinking extend beyond the classroom." For example, she said classes will be co-taught with specialists in order to expand upon topics the kids are interested in and explore project-based learning opportunities within the community.

Bacon Academy Principal Matthew Peel shared similar sentiments about the upcoming school year and the school's need to advance with the changing global economy. This fall, he said, teachers and students will be introduced to a new initiative he calls "Bacon 10."

"We took our 21st-century learning expectations that were created a couple years ago, and with the community's input, we flushed those out into 10 statements of overarching skills that students will need to be successful after Bacon," he said. "It makes a lot of sense because our job at the high school level is to produce competent graduates; to make sure

[that] when they get their diploma, they're ready to be successful. That's our mission; that's our purpose. Bacon 10 is about solidifying that and making sure everything we do is in line with that mission."

According to Peel, a panel including students and members of the community (small to large business owners and military personnel for example) sat down to discuss the initiative.

"We had a large variety of blue-collar and white-collar workers there, so we could get the bigger picture," he added. "The Bacon 10 was based on research. ... We went through it with them, and they said 'this is what we want in our employees; this is what we look for when we hire.'"

While Peel is excited about Bacon 10, he said probably the most noticeable change will be all the new faces about Bacon. He said the school had about 15 new staff hires this summer, with three more openings to fill before the school year begins.

"We did do a lot of hiring this summer," he said. "There were so many openings, due to either retirement or people moving and taking jobs elsewhere. The kids are going to see a bunch of new faces – and several of the new faces are actually Bacon Academy graduates."

Some of the Bacon graduates who have joined the school include new health teacher Kaitlyn Hogan, and two new family and consumer science teachers, Kasey Carter and Nann Thomson. Peel also expressed excitement that Allison Kelley will become the new part-time PE teacher and girls' soccer coach.

"She's a young girl with a lot of energy," he added. "She was also a very successful soccer player in Rhode Island at the college level. ... She'll bring some good coaching and knowledge to the team and our girls will love her."

Students can also expect to see new assistant principal Melissa Cyr roaming the halls this year. Cyr is replacing Dr. Charles Hewes, who transitioned to the district's director of learning and teaching.

"The kids and staff got to meet her last spring, and she's done a great job working with myself and the other assistant principal this summer," Peel said of Cyr. "The three of us [Peel, Cyr and fellow assistant principal Amy Begué] work really well together, so I'm looking forward to Bacon having a stable administration for many years to come."



Changes are in store for all of Colchester's schools this year – including Bacon Academy, which will feature no fewer than 15 new staff members roaming the halls.

Jack Jackter Intermediate School (JJIS) will see administration changes as well with new principal Elise Butson, who has over 19 years of experience in education and Higher Order Thinking (HOT) schools.

JJIS, which educates the town's third-through fifth-graders, has been a HOT school model since 1998, focusing on student voices in government and the integration of the arts.

"It allows the students to express all of their talents," Butson said after her appointment in April, explaining it was the reason she was drawn to the Colchester school system. "It has a really strong focus on academics and the social focus. It's about growing the whole child."

CES will be adding a developmental reading teacher, Lori Drube to their reading staff. "She will help support smaller group work for children and create further opportunities for moving students in reading," O'Meara said.

This year also marks CES' 10th anniversary, which will be commemorated throughout the

year with a variety of events.

"We will celebrate that throughout the year," O'Meara said – adding, teasingly, "I won't say what we're doing yet, but it'll be exciting."

Peel said Bacon Academy has also been reaching out to more colleges, such as Three Rivers Community Colleges and Eastern Connecticut State University, to add more courses to their Early College Experience program.

"We have some students who are graduating Bacon Academy and leaving with enough credits that they're starting college as sophomores," he said. "We're continuing to build those relationships and are always looking to add more classes... a lot of kids are going to be seeing that."

"Overall, there's a wonderful level of excitement in the entire school district," said Mathieu about the 2016-17 year. "The administration can't wait to have the students and teachers back."

Colchester Rotary Club Presents Police Dog with Ballistics Vest

by Julianna Roche

The Board of Selectmen welcomed a very special four-legged guest to its meeting last week – a black Labrador named Josie, Colchester Police Department's new narcotics dog.

And Josie also got some new duds while she was there, courtesy of the Colchester Rotary Club.

Two-year old Josie is one of eight drug-detecting dogs to recently graduate from an 11-week training course held at the state police kennel in Meriden.

The dogs have since been deployed to work with police departments across Connecticut, including Josie to her handler at CPD, Officer Jonathan Goss.

"It's a perfect fit. I don't have any other dogs at home, so she gets all the attention," said Goss. "She's not like normal dogs. She requires a lot of training. ... When we're not working here, we're at home working."

For example, Goss explained that Josie only eats directly from his hands, not a bowl. Additionally, the only time she eats is when she follows directions correctly or finds narcotics, which Goss said he practices hiding to train her. He said he hides small quantities of Drug Enforcement Administration-issued drugs in a variety of places, including cars, buildings, the woods – even inside backpacks, boxes, shoes or coolers – and has Josie try to find them.

"You want to just get her used to a little bit of everything," he added.

In the last three weeks since Josie has been on the road with Goss, he said they've had three positive finds on different traffic stops.

"We're getting there. The more we use her, the better it is for her," he said. "It builds her confidence. ... The little stuff will eventually lead to the big stuff."

Josie was originally in the Fidelco Seeing Eye dog classes training to become a guide dog, but due to her high energy and food-driven nature, she failed to meet their requirements. How-

ever, Goss said, those are perfect traits for a drug-sniffing dog.

"The main thing is that we use her in town," Goss explained. "[By] just having her out and about, people won't want to come here to sell drugs or have drugs. Hopefully it's a big deterrent – and she's going to be good for public relations too."

During the selectmen meeting, Josie was also presented with a ballistics vest by the Colchester Rotary Club, which recently hosted a "Paint Nite" fundraiser to raise money to purchase it, along with a drug safe which will be kept in Goss' police cruiser.

According to Rotary Club President Nicole Reardon, the fundraiser was very successful, drawing in residents from Colchester and surrounding communities. Additionally, John Gagnon's Pet Resort volunteered to match initial donations dollar-for-dollar, which helped the club raise a total of \$1,700.

"The community loved it," said Reardon. "People are all about animals. ... It wasn't even the project that raised money; it was the dog."

This wasn't the first time the community has helped with Josie. In fact, it was the community's help that made bringing a narcotics dog to the CPD possible. Area businesses, including Tractor Supply, Stop and Shop, and AB Graphics, donated various funds, goods and services to cover food and decals for the police cruiser. The funds raised also covered the \$2,300 it cost to acquire Josie from Fidelco.

Colchester Veterinary Hospital even offered to pay any vet costs for Josie for the entirety of her life, which will potentially save police thousands of dollars.

"It's a good town to work in. We get a lot of support here from our residents. I can't say that it's like that everywhere else... Even the businesses support us, and the department – the girls and guys we have here, are just great to work with," Goss said. "I'm looking forward to getting Josie out there and using her. We did the training and she's willing to work."



The Colchester Rotary recently raised money for a ballistics vest and drug safe for Colchester Police Department's new narcotics dog, Josie, and her handler, Officer Jonathan Goss. The items were presented at last week's meeting of the Board of Selectmen. From left are Colchester Rotarian Nicole Reardon, local artist Julianna Cameron (who also presented Goss with an original painting), Josie, and Goss.



The new school year at Andover Elementary starts next week – and the classrooms are in “move-in condition,” according to school principal John Briody. Meanwhile, the finishing touches are being put on the school roof, which saw the replacement of six sections that were around 20 years old. The majority of the work was done over the span of four weeks, and all that remained as of Wednesday was the installation of gutters and flashing.



‘Summer of Projects’ Drawing to Close at Andover Elementary School

by Geeta S. Sandberg

“This has been the summer of projects,” Andover Elementary School Principal John Briody shared this week.

Among those projects: roof replacement, painting, waxing, floor refinishing, website redesign and staff hirings – all in preparation for the start of school next Wednesday, Aug. 31.

“We’ve had a tremendous amount of activity here this summer – way more than usual,” Briody said, “with a new roof being put on in the span of less than four weeks, and we had basically 75 percent of the building painted on the inside.”

He furthered, “Then we had the gym floor refinished, our library is getting a complete makeover, we have a new sixth-grade teacher and a new assistant principal – and both hirings took place over the summer – so we’ve been super busy.”

Briody added of the roof project, which saw six sections of the school roof replaced, “all the main roofing has been done. What they’re working on next week between now and when we open is installing gutters and doing flashing. Last week all the equipment got removed from the site and all the extra materials.”

Also completed over the summer, a new school website was launched Thursday, Aug. 18, which can be found at andoverelementaryct.org.

“We’ve gotten some very positive feedback from the parents, although it’s certainly still under construction, and we’re going to add some information during the year,” Briody stated.

Assistant Principal Suzanne Guglietta – one of the summer hires – added some of the teachers had also participated in professional development in the areas of math and science during vacation.

“It’s nice to see staff taking initiative and finding and taking part in professional development,” she said.

Also staff-related, Guglietta mentioned teachers had already been coming into the school to get their classrooms ready.

“It’s nice to see that they’re preparing just as we are,” she said.

And Briody added, “The rooms are like, move-in condition; they’re ready for the kids today, and that just shows [the teachers’] dedication and just shows their interest in making the beginning of school special and meaningful. They’re putting in a lot of their own time getting ready.”

On the curriculum side of things, this will be the first year the school fully implements English Language Arts curriculum that’s been aligned with Common Core State Standards and

in the works for the last two years. The curriculum was implemented in grades five and six last year, but will now be implemented in every grade.

Briody said technology has also been improved in the school, with Chromebooks allocated to each classroom in grades four-six, and iPads available in the classrooms in kindergarten-grade three.

In addition, this is also the first year the school will be offering two full-day classes of preschool accredited with the National Association for the Education of Young Children – classes that are both full.

“Every year in recent memory there’s been two half-day classes,” Briody shared. “We decided to go to full-day pre-k not knowing that we would be inundated with requests. And when we were looking at the numbers, we had a choice to make: do we have a cutoff and turn people away and have one pre-k full day? Or do we open up a second one?”

Previous Assistant Principal Barbara Wilson, he said, worked with Superintendent Sally Doyen to make the latter the reality.

Guglietta added of the preschool, “It’s kind of a big deal being NAEYC accredited; we are for the next four years, and we have to meet

national standards for the programming [to keep that accreditation]. ... we can tout that.”

As the opening of school approaches, Briody shared he was looking forward to having students fill the building with their energy once again.

“I’m really looking forward to having kids in the building and seeing their smiling faces and being part of their day,” he stated.

Meanwhile, Guglietta said that, as her first year with Andover Elementary school gets underway, “I look forward to really connecting with the kids, with staff, with parents – with the community at large – and learning the ropes, and seeing where I can help parents, staff, support John with his initiatives, the board with their initiatives, and taking it all in. ... It’s definitely exciting.”

The first day of school is Wednesday, Aug. 31. The annual meet-and-greet, providing students the opportunity to meet their teacher and see their new classrooms, will take place the day before, Tuesday, Aug. 30, from 2:15-3 p.m. A bus ride for 4-year-old preschool students and kindergarten students will take place at 2:45 p.m.; bus riders should meet at the gym foyer doors at 2:40 p.m.

Hello, Goodbye for the Colchester Finance Board

by Julianna Roche

It was out with the old and in with the new at the Board of Finance meeting last week.

The board voted unanimously to appoint Republican Roberta Lepore to fill a vacancy – and to make Thomas Kane the board’s vice chairman.

Both moves were the result of longtime board member Robert Esteve’s recent announcement he’d be leaving the board, due to conflicts with his schedule. The resignation was to take effect Sept. 1, but instead it took effect at the Aug. 17 finance board meeting, as the board anticipated appointing Lepore that evening.

Esteve had been a member of the board since 2010, and was its vice chair.

At last week’s meeting, Esteve shared some words with the board as he bid farewell.

“I do this with a bit of a heavy heart,” he said. “I know it leaves you guys in a little bit of a bad position but after much consideration as my [resignation] letter said, I came to the conclusion that was the best thing I needed to do for now. Thank you for all the support over

the years, and the healthy debates, and being a member of a board that accomplished a lot in the last six years.”

The finance board interviewed Lepore at its Aug. 3 meeting. She currently works as senior director of Global Risk, Compliance and Control at Pfizer. Her previous experience includes working as an auditor for Arthur Andersen, LLP and executive director of finance for the Mohegan Tribe of Indians.

“I think her resume is great,” Board of Finance Chairman Rob Tarlov said at that meeting. “I thought she interviewed well.”

“There’s never going to be a decision where you make everyone happy,” Lepore said at that meeting. “We have to make the best decisions with what we have and be comfortable we found some middle ground. ... It’s not always how we cut expenses, but how do we bring in revenue? I don’t have the answers, but I certainly have a lot of questions on what we are doing – and how we can do it differently.”

Lepore’s term runs through November 2017.

Portland Man Blacks Out, Hits Light Pole

by Elizabeth Regan

Police said a local man blacked out on his way home from Cumberland Farms last Saturday night, veering left onto the Veterans Park lawn behind Town Hall and wiping out a small tree, a cement bench and a light pole.

A police report from the Portland Police Department said Joseph Engel, 30, was on Fairview Street preparing to turn right to get to his 2 Highland Ave. home when the “unknown medical issue” occurred. The crash occurred around 9:34 p.m.

Engel’s truck traveled over 300 feet on the lawn before coming to a rest behind the town hall, police said. A small tree, about six inches around, was snapped at its base, as was a decorative light pole. A three-foot-long cement bench was broken.

The police report said Engel had no apparent injuries and was not transported to the hospital. His Ford Ranger sustained front-end damage, but was able to be driven from the scene.

Police said Engel told them he remembered seeing a bright, white light, “which he later realized was a light pole.”

A witness and fellow Highland Avenue resident, Bill Donahue, told police he was behind Engel when the car went off the road. Donahue said Engel was traveling around 20-25 miles per hour and that he never hit his brakes while driving through the field.

Donahue yelled to Engel to get out of the car once it came to a stop, according to the report. Donahue said Engel told him he didn’t remember what happened and that he looked shaken up.

Police said there was “no criminal aspect” to the crash.

First Selectwoman Susan Bransfield said the town is still assessing the cost of the damage. The light pole was installed in 2000, and replacements of that particular style may no longer be available.

Class Sizes Climb to 27 at East Hampton Center School

by Elizabeth Regan

Predictions of classroom overcrowding made by Superintendent of Schools Paul Smith earlier this year have become a reality as Center School's fifth-grade teachers prepare for class sizes of up to 27 students.

At a Board of Education meeting Monday evening, Center School Principal Mary Clark said four out of six fifth-grade sections have 27 students. The remaining two sections have 26 students.

And registrations are still coming in, according to several school administrators.

Smith said after the meeting that class sizes ranging from 20-22 are ideal and classes with up to 24 students are reasonable.

"Our goal is to personalize education and it just becomes harder for a teacher when you're talking 26, 27 students," he said.

As part of Smith's aggressive effort to put forth a bare-bones 2016-17 budget proposal that would earn taxpayer approval in a single referendum, he recommended cutting two teaching positions at the middle school and not hiring a new teacher at Center School when he submitted his spending plan to the school board in January.

Updates from Smith leading up to the June referendum emphasized that the proposed bud-

get represented the "smallest possible increase" and that sacrifices, like larger fifth-grade classes, had been built into the proposal from the beginning.

Clark said Tuesday it was clear all along that maintaining existing staffing levels at Center School would lead to overcrowding.

"We have the same number of teachers in 2016-17 we had last year," she said. "The difference is the fifth grade has approximately 30 more students."

The challenge for teachers lies in meeting the needs of more students without additional time or resources, according to Clark. Besides delivering instruction to a larger number of students, teachers must also figure out ways to make sure there are enough supplies – from desks, to pencils, to textbooks.

A lack of technological resources is an example of problems teachers may have to deal with if they have a large class. Take Chromebooks, for example: Carts are set up to carry enough of the internet-based laptops for an entire class so the students can access educational programs and work on collaborative projects. But those carts aren't equipped for classes with 27 students.

"Typically, school districts are not planning

for class sizes so large," Clark said.

A 2015 study on racial, socioeconomic and geographic disparities in class size from the advocacy group Connecticut Voices for Children said research shows students tend to exhibit higher achievement when they're in smaller classes.

"While this literature is not exhaustive and some questions remain about the detailed effects of class-size reduction, the benefits of small classes are so well known that it is likely that many Connecticut school districts may invest in class size reduction efforts if they can afford to do so," the study said.

An enrollment report presented to the Board of Education showed overall anticipated enrollment numbers for the upcoming school year remained relatively stable compared to statistics from June.

The biggest discrepancy was at Center School, where there are 36 more students expected this year than there were at the end of the last school year.

The teachers' contract negotiated between the East Hampton Education Association and the district specifies "reasonable efforts shall be made to maintain the class size at no more than twenty-five pupils. Only in special circum-

stances may there be more than thirty pupils in a classroom."

Smith said that while adding another teacher is the ideal scenario, budget constraints made that impossible for the coming school year.

"I think our teachers will be reasonable and we'll give them the support they need," he said, adding that there is para-educator support for special needs students in the classrooms.

"So we're going to manage," he said.

Clark emphasized that parents and the wider community should be informed about what's going on in the district and involved in the budget planning process from the beginning.

It's about "looking carefully at the needs of our students so we can hopefully avoid class sizes so large in the future," according to Clark.

"We look forward to that process and being able to work with the community around that," she added.

School and district-level administrators analyze their budget priorities throughout the fall, with the superintendent presenting his recommendations to the Board of Education in January.

The Board of Education generally meets twice a month during the school year, on the first and third Monday.

Portland Students to Get Chromebooks in New School Year

by Elizabeth Regan

Students in grades five through 12 will soon be walking the halls with their own laptop computers, as the district begins to move toward a way of learning based in the World Wide Web instead of the pages of a textbook.

Director of Curriculum Instruction and Technology Krista Karch said the district will be rolling out 775 Chromebooks throughout the fall. The first internet-based laptops will be given to students at Portland Middle School during the initial week or two of school, while students at the high school and Brownstone Intermediate School should expect to receive their computers by the end of November.

That means every student in each of the three buildings will have their own computers to use during the school day.

"Everyone is equal in this initiative, which I think is awesome," Karch said.

The ratio of one laptop to each student allows the district to start laying an online foundation for the entire curriculum, according to Karch. An example of the shift can be seen in the Advanced Placement Psychology course at the high school, where students will be foregoing the old fashioned textbook in favor of online material.

Karch described the \$200,000 Chromebook program as part of the district's focus on creating "digital citizens" able to use technology in a safe and responsible way as they communicate, collaborate and learn.

She said funding for the project came from careful budgeting and a \$48,000 grant from the non-profit Gildersleeve Wheeler Education Fund.

"We trimmed any fat," Karch said. "We looked at all of our software programs and our necessary supplies and made sure our priorities were in line with this initiative and made sure we lived within our budget to make this happen."

The Lenovo N22 computers come with a four-year warranty.

Students will pick up their laptops each morning and return them at the end of the school day.

Administrators are exploring options to be able to send the computers home with students, according to Karch, and hope to be able to work through all the details this year.

She said the computers may initially be entrusted to a limited number of grade levels once a take-home process is put in place – but eventually providing the opportunity to all students is an idea that has support from the kids themselves all the way up to the Board of Education.

"The hidden truth is that then their learning goes 24 hours," Karch said. "A snow day, a sick day, they can keep going. The classroom really doesn't stop."

Portland Schools Technology Integration Specialist Michael Peck said the infusion of new Chromebooks in the higher grade levels freed up 245 Apple laptops to be moved to Gildersleeve School. The ratio in the building, which houses students in grades two through four, will be almost "one to one."

One laptop per student means online learning can be incorporated into lessons in all subject areas. Instead of scheduling time to go to the computer lab or to bring in borrowed computers on a cart, any information that can be accessed through the Internet will be available all the time.

Teachers will use the Google Classroom framework to manage assignments, discussions, tests and grading on the new Chromebooks. The platform includes components such as word processing, email and a calendar. Information can be shared with the whole class or individual students.

A guide from Google describes possibilities that include using apps, videos and websites to do things like invite remote guest lecturers into the classroom; research and present projects; create graphs and maps; and enhance keyboarding and coding skills.

Peck said web filters, firewalls and individual accounts keep the system secure and prevent students from accessing inappropriate content.

The program was tested over the past school year in grade seven, according to Karch. A survey sent out at the end of the year showed the



Portland Schools Director of Curriculum Instruction and Technology Krista Karch (right) and Technology Integration Specialist Michael Peck are getting ready to roll out 775 Internet-based laptops for use by students in grades five through 12.

initiative was well received by students and teachers alike.

She said teachers reported a shift in their teaching style once all the students had access to a computer all the time.

"From physical education to family consumer science to world language to English to math, every single subject really mentioned their excitement and enthusiasm in the shift," Karch said.

Students reported being more organized and more engaged in lessons because of the collaborative approach.

"They felt privileged to have their device and they really thrived," Peck said.

Last year's seventh-graders had a hand in

drafting their own Chromebook Constitution detailing their rights and responsibilities as digital citizens.

Karch said the students held each other accountable for how they used their laptops.

"For example, in the middle of class you're checking your email. Well, that's great that you're using this device to check your email. That's very appropriate. But that's not an appropriate time to do that," she said.

A sense of ownership in the process led to a heightened respect for the device itself, Peck said. The extent of the damage to the 125 laptops in the pilot program was the loss of one key from a single keyboard.

Marlborough Elementary School Spruced Up for New Year

by Julianna Roche

Students returning to Marlborough Elementary School this fall will notice some big improvements inside the building with several new additions, including new lights and painting of the school's interior.

Principal Dan White said there was an interior lighting project at the school over the summer, which involved switching out two-thirds of the interior lights to fluorescent lights, which he said will save the school about \$16,000 each year.

"Hopefully we'll finish the rest of the building next summer," he said.

Additionally, White said they continued painting the interior of the building, including the primary wing. The painting will continue during the year, he added, and classrooms will be painted either a "blissful blue" or "fun yellow" color.

"The building looks fabulous," added Assistant Principal Kim Kelley enthusiastically.

Recess will be even more fun for students in the early childhood program, who will be welcomed into the 2016-17 school year with a brand new purple and blue painted playscape, which is also handicapped-accessible. The playground addition, which sits on a large rubberized surface boasting a series of slides, stairs, seesaws and a roundabout, is the result of a \$20,000 donation by the school's Parent Teacher Organization (PTO). It will be used by pre-kindergarten, kindergarten and first grade students.

"It's a symbol of the kind of passion people have for this school," said Superintendent of

Schools David Sklarz.

According to both Kelley and Sklarz, the school's staff has also adopted newer technology standards both in instructional methods and lesson plans, particularly in social studies and science. For example, the science classes will put more emphasis on students developing engineering skills and incorporating robotics into lesson plans, Kelley said.

"Last year we stepped a tiny bit into robotics, and the kids really loved it," she said, adding that was what she was most excited about going into the school year. "I'm looking forward to how teachers will adapt."

Another change will be with the number of kindergarten classes – which is going from four sections last year to three this coming year. The Board of Education decided last spring, during the budget process, to trim one of the sections, based on the New England School Development Council's (NESDEC's) enrollment projection of 39 kindergarteners at the school for the 2016-17 school year.

The school board last week opted to stick with three classes – despite the fact that enrollment is now at 61. This means that each of three kindergarten classes will have 20 or 21 students this year, along with one teacher and one para-professional.

Despite the larger class sizes, Sklarz this week emphasized that he didn't believe this would be a problem, especially with the added para-professional in each classroom this year, as well as staff support.

"I feel very confident in the quality of our teachers," he said.



Students in the early childhood program at Marlborough Elementary School will be able to play on a brand-new playscape, which is also handicapped-accessible, during the 2016-17 school year.

Sklarz also said the para-professionals who will be in each classroom are "second to none" and "at any other school, they'd be teachers themselves."

* * *

For White, the new school year can't start soon enough.

"I am most excited to have kids back in the building," he said. "Summer is a nice opportunity to get things done, but the excitement is

with having kids in the building."

"Every start of the school year is exciting," agreed Sklarz. "The teachers came out this week and you can see it on their faces how excited they are. It's in the air."

On Tuesday, Aug. 31, from 8:15-9:15 a.m., Marlborough Elementary School will host their annual Meet and Greet, and the first day of school is Wednesday, Aug. 31.

Marlborough Day Returns Sunday

by Julianna Roche

Although the first day of school may be right around the corner, summer fun doesn't have to come to an end just yet, with the Marlborough Business Association (MBA) hosting its 10th annual Marlborough Day this Sunday, Aug. 28 at Blish Park from 11 to 5 p.m.

"There's a lot of the same this year, but there are a few changes and additions," said MBA member and It's So Ranunculus owner Craig Robinson, who also chairs the Marlborough Day Committee.

For instance, regular Marlborough Day attendees can look forward to the return of yearly favorites such as the Roaming Railroad, a trackless train that offers rides to kids around the park. There will also be a henna tattoo artist and face-painting. Additionally, Robinson said for the kids, they will have a Disney Princess and potentially a character from the popular Nickelodeon children's show *PAW Patrol* available for photo opportunities, as well as a photo booth.

As with every year, a variety of food vendors, exhibitors from local businesses and community organizations will have booths set up. As of now, MBA administrative assistant Shannon Bielaczyc said there are 14 local vendors, but that number may grow by Sunday. New this year however will be an Eversource and Clean Energy Communities booth, where professionals will demonstrate how to use energy-efficient equipment.

"They're making an effort to get people to be more efficient home and business-wise," said Robinson. "This way, all the regular joes, and business moms and dads with homes, can talk to these people and see some of the equipment they could put into their house."

The Marlborough Volunteer Fire Department will also be on site with a water cannon and an EMT truck for demonstrations. According to rescue captain Mark Merritt, the department is in dire need of more volunteers, so those interested will also have an opportunity to get more

information and potentially sign up.

As with previous years, a Closest to the Pin contest will be held for golfers, as well as the ever-popular Prize Walk, which is similar to a game of musical chairs which gives participants the opportunity to win some prizes. According to Bielaczyc, they will be doing a Tea Cup raffle (with all proceeds going toward the MBA scholarship fund) and as a grand door prize, they'll be giving away a Trek mountain bike valued at \$500.

Over at Lake Terramuggus, L.L. Bean Discovery Tours will return for the third year in a row to offer paddleboard and kayaking lessons, with instructors hosting demonstrations on the water. Kids will also have the opportunity to participate in sports activities such as wiffle ball, volleyball and tennis.

"There are a lot of games and it's definitely fun for the kids," Bielaczyc said.

After working up an appetite, hungry attend-

ees can look forward to food from Marlborough Pizza, and The Whey Station, a mobile food truck, will be serving up their gourmet grilled cheese sandwiches.

"The Republicans will also do fried dough and the Democrats have gourmet popcorn," he added. "Usually we have about three to four food vendors."

It wouldn't be Marlborough Day without live entertainment, so guests can also expect performances by local bands and musical acts Jim Ferguson, Halley Rose Neal, The Modern Riffs and Gravy Train. Additionally, Hot Stepz Dance Academy of Marlborough and the Marlborough Fire and Drum Corps will perform.

"It's a really nice community event. All the local businesses are there, but it's also nice because during the summer, everyone scatters," Bielaczyc added. "At the end of the summer, it's great for the community, for everyone to come back together and get reconnected."

Hebron Day Returns Saturday

by Geeta S. Sandberg

With the weather forecast to be hot and sunny Saturday, Hebron residents looking for an event that'll get them outside to enjoy the day need look no further than Burnt Hill Park. There, for the third year in a row, Hebron Day will take place from 1-5 p.m.

The event started in 2014 as a way to celebrate the community, and will kick off this year with a 5k run/walk at 9 a.m. open to participants of all ages. All runners will receive a t-shirt, and awards will be presented to the fastest runners in multiple age groups. A registration table will be set up the day of the event from 7:45-8:45 a.m. Cost is \$31.

After the race, the rest of the activities get underway at 1 p.m. and include wagon rides, family games, a dog agility and grooming exhibit, caricature drawings, face painting and more.

Games include a balloon toss, potato sack race, tug-of-war, and a wheelbarrow race; RHAM football is also hosting a punt, pass and kick contest at 2 p.m., and there'll be a volleyball tournament from 2-3 p.m., followed by a Little League baseball game.

Participants will also be able to enjoy entertainment at the Pavilion from the Sunshine Singers, a comedy juggler, James Blair, and comedy magic; and grab a bite to eat from Majestic Kettle Corn, Mama Shank's Ice Cream, Pit Crew BBQ, and Hebron Youth Base-

ball Concession.

Those looking to do a little shopping will also find a number of vendors on-site including Andies Candies, Heart Art Crafts, Enchanted Treasures, Lali's Things and Jafra's Cosmetics.

Speaking to the upcoming event, Richard Gadoury, recreation manager with Hebron Parks and Recreation said his hopes were "just for families to come out and have a good time and see everything we have to offer in the community."

Town Manager Andrew Tierney added, "I'm very excited because it looks like we're going to have good weather... and [Gadoury's] done a very good job organizing and scheduling everything that's going to happen. He's got quite a bit of an agenda of events for people to enjoy."

Tierney added, "It's only a couple years in the making and we're trying to make it better than it has been; I'm hoping for a good turnout and I hope it's going to be better than last year, and then we'll try to build it to be even better for next year based on this year."

He concluded, "I hope to see everybody there."

* * *

For more information contact the Parks and Recreation Department at 860-530-1281. Burnt Hill Park is located at 148 East St.

Oily Rags Leads to Hebron Blaze

by Geeta S. Sandberg

A fire at a Hebron home Sunday morning required mutual aid from six towns and was caused by oily rags, according to Hebron Fire Marshall Randy Blais.

The call came in at 3:45 a.m. Sunday, Aug. 21, for a fire at a two-story home at 47 Bissell Ridge Rd. Five residents and their dog were home at the time but Blais said "everybody got out – no one got hurt."

The fire started in the garage from discarded oily rags that spontaneously combusted. Blais explained the family was using teak oil on some furniture, and, when they were done, they put the rags in an old dog food bag, rolled up the bag and put it in the garage.

"We've had it happen before in trash cans," he explained. "It builds up heat and spontaneously combusts. It takes usually 10-12 hours for it to do it, depending on the temperature and how tight the space is."

As a result of the blaze the home had fire

damage to the garage, laundry room and kitchen and heat and smoke damage throughout the rest of the building, Blais stated.

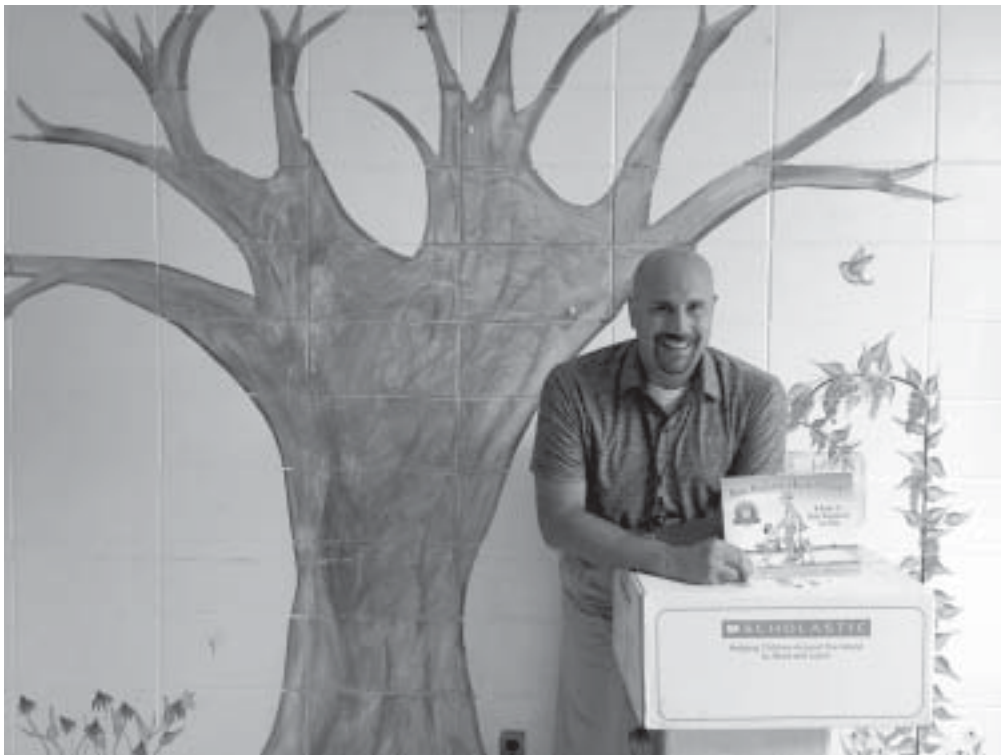
The home is salvageable, he added, but "basically they're going to have to gut the whole house and all of the sheet rock will have to come out – there was a lot of smoke and heat damage."

Blais said the correct way to dispose of oily rags is to soak them in water and place them away from the home.

"Most people put them in a metal can, fill it with water and set it away from the house until they can dispose of them," he said.

* * *

Along with the Hebron Fire Department, mutual aid was received by the Andover, Bolton, Columbia, Colchester, Marlborough and Manchester fire departments, as well as paramedics from Windham.



Gilead Hill School Principal Eric Brody is ready to help students grow their knowledge as another year gets underway in Hebron, which includes a number of new initiatives such as Bucket Fillers, a program based on the book Brody's holding, *Have You Filled Your Bucket Today?*, that focuses on caring for one another, understanding and empathy. Many of the classrooms – like the one shown here at Hebron Elementary School – are already ready to welcome students next Wednesday, Aug. 31.

'Great Things' Planned as Hebron Heads Back to School

by Geeta S. Sandberg

A lot of "great things" are in store as students make their way back to Gilead Hill and Hebron Elementary Schools next week, according to schools superintendent Tim Van Tassel.

"We've got a lot of great things for the upcoming year," he shared this week.

One of them is a new STEAM initiative for grades three-six. Hebron Elementary School Principal Katie Uriano is developing a "Makerspace," Van Tassel explained, which is a place meant to encourage students' interest in science, technology, engineering, arts and math through hands-on opportunities to design, build and create.

In addition, a program is being implemented to focus on the "social and emotional" aspects of the child: Bucket Fillers. Based on the story *Have You Filled Your Bucket Today?* by Carol McCloud, (a copy of which will be provided to every student, funded by the Parent Teacher Association) Van Tassel said, "It's about caring for one another and understanding and empathy."

The program will involve multiple events throughout the year, as well as professional development and a parent evening.

"We're going to connect it with our PBIS [Positive Behavior Intervention Support] program in the schools – our tiered interventions not for the academic, but the emotional – and this year that's going to be a nice complement to that," he stated.

Van Tassel said another initiative that will be unveiled this year meant to increase communication is a district mobile application. Families

will be able to download the app and use it to find information such as the lunch menu, receive a live feed similar to Twitter, easily access all bulletins and newsletters, contact staff and administrators, and receive emergency notifications.

Academic-wise, a reader's workshop, meant to provide "more opportunities for student choice, so the ownership of student learning rests with the student," is being implemented. During the workshops, mini-lessons will take place for the first 5-10 minutes, while the remainder of the time will be used for independent or small group work. Over the past three years the district has been implementing the writer's workshop, Van Tassel explained, "So now we're going to implement the reader's workshop."

Along with the above, Van Tassel mentioned the district was in the second year of a new math program, and said a lot has been done in regards to the standards-based report cards implemented last year, "and we're working to support parent understanding as well as student understanding."

Also new this year is the addition of a library media specialist, which puts one at each school. There is also an additional section of preschool, which brings the district to three full-day sections and two half-day sections (conversely, the Board of Education voted to reduce the number of kindergarten sections from three to two).

In addition, a breakfast program is being piloted at Hebron Elementary School; any stu-

dent can participate, and would receive a grab-and-go breakfast bag to take to class as they begin their day.

A change in how the day works for sixth-grade students is also occurring at HES; previously they would change classes for science and social studies, but they'll now switch classes for all of their subjects, in an attempt to help prepare them for the transition to middle and high school.

This is the start of Van Tassel's second school year as Hebron's superintendent.

"We made tremendous progress last year. We implemented probably more than I would have asked for in my initial year, it's just there were so many things already underway," Van Tassel stated. "But we managed and found our way."

He added, "Every year we try to build on the previous year. We did so much in that initial year and I am truly grateful to the staff here, my administrative team, the teachers, non-certified staff – and we had a Board of Education that has been tremendously supportive of the work we're doing in the district."

The district, Van Tassel furthered, is "still in a very good place," even though the school budget was reduced \$231,500 from the previous year.

"Our students will get the best we can possibly provide them within the means we have been afforded," he said. "Everyone remains committed to making sure our public schools remain very competitive."

Along with Van Tassel, other administrators

at the two schools were looking forward to building on the work that's already been done and the start of another year.

Patricia Buell, director of educational services, shared, "I think we're in a great place from all that work last year and I'm excited about the work we have this year; many, many pieces are all in line ready to move forward. The kids will benefit from the hard work of staff in setting all these pieces up."

Gilead Hill School Principal Eric Brody added this week, "For us here at Gilead Hill School we just want to continue to build on a lot of the positive work that's already been done; we put a lot of things into place last year and I think we have a lot of momentum going in terms of our programming and where the district is headed and our vision and I think we just need to continue to build on that."

Meanwhile, at Hebron Elementary School, Uriano added, "I'm looking forward to the new reading program, and the Bucket Fillers. ... We've got the reading, the math, the writing – and now Bucket Fillers, which is a PBIS program for the social and emotional aspects. It's important and makes sure we're supporting the whole child beyond just the academics."

Like the others, Uriano added she was also "looking forward to just building on what we did last year."

The opportunity to start that building begins next Wednesday, Aug. 31, when doors open for the first day of school.

East Hampton Police News

8/18: Cassandra Calkins, 35, of 540 Vernon St., Manchester, was taken into custody pursuant to an active warrant for her arrest and was charged with third-degree identity theft, criminal impersonation and fourth-degree larceny, East Hampton Police said.

Marlborough Police News

8/20: State Police said Sean M. Paradis, 20, of 5 Buttonhook Ln., Portland, was arrested and charged with reckless driving, operating a motor vehicle under the influence of drugs and alcohol, and failure to drive in the proper lane on a multiple-lane highway.

Portland Police News

8/12: Amir Nitowski, 18, of 3 Smith Farm Rd., Cromwell, was charged with illegal possession of marijuana, Portland Police said.

8/15: Erik Lagerstrom, 40, of 16 Gloria Heights, was charged with third-degree criminal mischief, police said.

8/16: Timothy Leonard, 18, of 26 Myrtle Rd., was charged with theft of a firearm, fifth-degree larceny, second-degree reckless endanger-

Hebron Police News

8/15: State Police said that, after responding to a disturbance on Deepwood Drive, they arrested and charged a juvenile with disorderly conduct and third-degree assault.

8/21: State Police said Marlon E. Bernard, 21, of 59 Nepaug St., Hartford, was arrested and charged with operating a motor vehicle with suspended registration/license, operating a motor vehicle under the influence of drugs/alcohol, and for a stop sign violation.

8/21: State Police said Eugene Wright, 45, of 108 Clark Rd., Colchester was arrested and charged with violating a protective order.

ment and unlawful discharge of a firearm, police said.

8/21: Wayne Tait, 57, of 69 Gillette St., Hartford, was charged with sixth-degree larceny and third-degree forgery, police said.

8/23: Walter McKelvey, 50, of 18 Riverside St., was charged with second-degree breach of peace and second-degree threatening, police said.

Colchester Police News

8/14: Colchester Police said David M. Gazdzicki, 28, of 773 Middletown Rd. was arrested and charged with second-degree failure to appear in regards to an active PRAWN warrant for sixth-degree larceny.

8/15: According to state police, a 17-year-old juvenile female was charged with failure to respond to an infraction after turning herself in on an active arrest warrant for creating a public disturbance.

8/15: State Police said Charles Lineberry, 46, of 135 Sillmanville Rd., Moodus, turned himself in and was charged with second-degree failure to appear in regards to an active PRAWN warrant for improper use of marker/license/registration, illegal operation of a motor vehicle with minimum insurance, operating a motor vehicle without a license, and operating an unregistered motor vehicle.

8/19: Colchester Police said Crystal Mcfarlane, 51, of 216 S. Thames St., Norwich, was arrested and charged with third-degree identity theft.

8/19: Colchester Police said Edwin J. Lewis, 33, of 12 Balaban Rd., Apt #602, was arrested and charged with operating a motor vehicle under the influence of drugs and alcohol, possession of drug paraphernalia, and illegal possession of narcotics.

8/19: Colchester Police responded to a residential burglary on Shadbush Drive at approximately 5:50 p.m., where entry was made through an unlocked door on the side of the garage. A chainsaw and leaf-blower was reported stolen from the residence. Anyone with information about this incident is asked to contact the Colchester Police at 860-537-7270.

Obituaries

Colchester

Omer R. Lessard

Omer R. Lessard, 84, of Colchester, formerly of Bolton, beloved husband of Dorothy (Quint) Lessard, passed away Wednesday, Aug. 17, at home, surrounded by loved ones. Born Sept. 20, 1931, in Hartford, he was the son of the late Ovila and Alice (DuBois) Lessard.

Shortly before his 19th birthday, he joined the Army National Guard and was called to active duty at the start of the Korean War. Mr. Lessard retired as vice president of sales of DuBois Chemicals after working up through the ranks over many years. Omer and Dot had settled in Bolton to raise their family and had been residents for 50 years before recently moving to Colchester. Together, they were longtime active members of the Bolton Congregational Church.

He leaves to mourn his passing his loving wife of 63 years, Dot; his son and daughter-in-law, Brad and Doreen Lessard of Lebanon; a daughter, Mindy Lessard of Florida; a daughter-in-law, Susan Lessard of Plainfield; five grandchildren, Travis Head, Carolyn Pohronezny, Geoffrey Lessard, Melinda Lessard and Carrie Peterson; seven great grandchildren, Ricky, Casey, Emily, Riley, Travis Jr., Alyssa and Jacob; and numerous extended family and friends.

In addition to his parents, he was predeceased by two sons, Barry and Blaine Lessard, and two brothers, Donald and William Lessard.

A memorial service celebrating his life was observed Tuesday, Aug. 23, at the Bolton Congregational Church, 228 Bolton Center Rd., Bolton. There were no calling hours and burial was private.

Care of arrangements has been entrusted to the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home of Colchester. For more information, visit auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com.

Amston

Barbara Pincus

Barbara "Bunny" Pincus, 79, of Amston, formerly of Long Island, passed away Monday, Aug. 22. Born May 14, 1937 in Freeport, N.Y., she was the daughter of the late Paul and Lillian (Lerner) Shebar.

Early on, she had worked in various positions at the family business, Freeport Utilities. Bunny went on to serve as Controller for the Israel Cancer Research Fund in Manhattan.

An animal lover, she was very proud to be a volunteer "puppy walker" for the Guide Dog Federation on Long Island and later, Fidelco, after retiring to Connecticut in 2005 to be closer to her daughters that she leaves behind: Ellen Sharon of Colchester and Nancy Pincus (and Ted Stumm) of Moodus.

Care of private arrangements has been entrusted to the Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home in Colchester.

Donations in her memory may be made to the Douglas Library, 22 Main St., Hebron 06248 or to the CT Humane Society, 701 Russell Road, Newington, CT 06111.

For online condolences, visit auroramccarthyfuneralhome.com.

Portland

Vincenza Wilk

Vincenza "Jennie" Wilk, 103, beloved wife of the late Joseph Wilk, passed away peacefully Saturday, Aug. 20, at the Portland Care & Rehabilitation Center. Born Sept. 7, 1912, in Middletown, she was the daughter of the late Giuseppe and Angela (Russo) Lastrina. Jennie relocated to Portland with her family as a young girl.

She owned and operated her own gardening business with her husband. They grew and sold fresh fruits and vegetables to the community. Jennie was a longtime parishioner of St. Mary Church. She was an avid reader and enjoyed the outdoors.

Mrs. Wilk is survived by her brother Joseph Lastrina of Portland; sister-in-law June Lastrina of Portland and several nieces and nephews.

She was predeceased by her brothers Andrew and Sebastian Lastrina and three sisters, Santina Lastrina, Italia Bransfield and Violetta Ludwig.

Family and friends are invited to attend her Mass of Christian Burial Saturday, Aug. 27, at 10 a.m., in St. Mary Church, Portland. Burial will follow in St. Augustine Cemetery, So. Glastonbury.

In lieu of flowers donations in memory of Jennie Wilk may be made to St. Mary Church, 51 Freestone Ave., Portland, CT 06480.

Funeral arrangements have been entrusted to the Portland Memorial Funeral Home, 231 Main St., Portland. To send an online expression of sympathy, visit portlandmemorialfh.net.

East Hampton

Betty Marie Anderson

Betty Marie Anderson, 85, beloved wife of the late Clifford G. Anderson, died Sunday, Aug. 21, at the Cobalt Lodge Health Care and Rehabilitation Center. Born Oct. 6, 1930, in Wethersfield, she was the daughter of the late Harry and Florence (Vosberg) Hughes.

Betty worked for the State of Connecticut Veterans Home, from where she retired after over 20 years of service. She was a breast cancer survivor since 2008.

Betty liked to take trips to the casinos, play bingo and go camping at Markham Meadows in East Hampton. She was an avid country music fan, Vince Gill being one of her favorites. Most important to Betty was spending time with her family, especially her grandchildren whom she loved dearly.

Mrs. Anderson is survived by her children, Phillip H. Anderson and his wife Kimberley of Colchester, Joyce Murphy and her husband Michael of Portland; a sister, Shirley Post of Florida; her three cherished grandsons, Matthew Murphy and his wife Emily, Benjamin Murphy and his fiancé Leah Gardiner and Andrew Murphy. She also leaves a special companion, son Phil and his wife Kim's dog Harley, whom she was very fond of.

She was predeceased by seven brothers, Kermit, Melvin, George, William, Robert, Harry, Richard and four sisters, Alice, Gloria, Marjorie and June.

Family and friends paid their respects Wednesday, Aug. 24, at the Portland Memorial Funeral Home, 231 Main St., Portland. Burial will be private.

In lieu of flowers, donations in memory of Betty Anderson may be made to the Sandy Peszynski Breast Cancer Foundation, 93 East High St., East Hampton, CT 06424 or to the East Hampton Volunteer Ambulance Association, P.O. Box 144, East Hampton, CT 06424.

Marlborough

MaryEllen Fries

MaryEllen Dorothy Fries passed away unexpectedly Thursday, Aug. 18. She was the daughter of Craig Fries and Joan (Bonin) Fries. Born Oct. 28, 1965, she was a graduate of RHAM High School Class of 1983.

Early on she was employed at Blackledge Country Club, and later began working at Ris Paper in 1984, followed by Thames Paper in 1986. Shortly after, she made the choice to become a stay at home mother. She ran her own cleaning company from 1998-2010. Most recently, she was employed at Go Greenly and Ronald McDonald House in New Haven, where she will be greatly missed.

MaryEllen had a profound drive to help others, this was apparent by her interests in the medical field, and the many volunteer agencies she was involved with.

She was predeceased by her grandfather Nelson Fries. In addition to her parents, she leaves behind her grandmother Elenor Fries of Marlborough; brother Kevin Fries and wife Dawn of Colchester; children Adam Cafro and wife Kaitlyn of Woolwich Maine; Tyler Cafro of Glastonbury; and Alissa Cafro of Hebron. Other family includes her niece, two nephews, many aunts, uncles and cousins.

Although services are private, a Celebration of Life will be held Saturday, Sept. 3, at Blackledge Country Club, 180 West St., Hebron, CT from 1-4 p.m.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to either Roy B. Pentengill Ambulance Association, P.O. Box 308, Marlborough, CT 06447, or to the Ronald McDonald House of New Haven, 501 George St., New Haven, CT 06511.

Portland

Anne Lembo Ferrucci

Anne Lembo Ferrucci, 101, of Hartford, formerly of Middlebury and Portland, passed away Tuesday, Aug. 16, at St. Francis Hospital. She was predeceased by her former husband, Rocco M. Ferrucci.

Mrs. Ferrucci was born Aug. 18, 1914, in Waterbury, daughter of the late Fedele and Alberta Gialella Lembo. Anne was raised in Waterbury as one of nine children, before moving to Middlebury, and was a graduate of Dale Carnegie.

She is survived by her daughter, MaryAnn DelRusso and her husband Robert of Portland; two sons, James Ferrucci of Goshen and John Ferrucci of Hartford; and her special friend, Wilbur Wagner of Hartford; two grandchildren Bob DelRusso Jr. of Portland and Pamela DelRusso Peterson (Cornelius) of Littleton, Mass.; two great-grandchildren, Cornelius Peterson and Jessica Peterson of Boston, Mass., and several nieces and nephews.

She was predeceased by six sisters and two brothers.

Calling hours for Mrs. Ferrucci were held Sunday, Aug. 21, at The Alderson-Ford Funeral Home of Waterbury, 9 Holmes Ave., Waterbury, CT 06710. Anne's funeral was held Monday, Aug. 22, from the funeral home and proceeded to St. John of the Cross, 1263 West St, Middlebury, for a funeral Mass. Burial will be at the convenience of the family at Ledgelawn Cemetery in Bar Harbor, Maine.

Donations in her name may be made to the South Park Inn, 75 Main St., Hartford, CT 06106.

To view these arrangements online, or share a condolence or an online photo, visit fordfh.com.

Colchester

Dorothy M. Rydzewski

Dorothy M. Mioduszewski Rydzewski, 82, a longtime resident of Norwich, died Monday, Aug. 15. Born in Montville Nov. 20, 1933, she was the daughter of the late Leon S. and Ethel J. (Clifford) Curtin.

She was first married to Henry J. Mioduszewski on Sept. 7, 1953. They were married 16 years until his passing July 26, 1970. Her second marriage was to Charles Rydzewski on April 18, 1981, and they were married for 26 years until his passing June 27, 2007.

Dorothy grew up in Norwich and was a graduate of the Norwich Free Academy Class of 1951. She was retired having worked for 27 years at the former Grand Champion Foods in Norwich.

She is survived by two sons, Henry J. Mioduszewski Jr. and James L. Mioduszewski and wife Suzanne; three grandsons, Jason Mioduszewski and wife Tristan, Aaron Mioduszewski, and James Mioduszewski and wife Mandy; two granddaughters, Stacey Trottier and husband Joseph and Stephanie Adams and husband Ryan; four great granddaughters, Lily, Hailey, Jaelyn, and Charlotte; two great-grandsons, Quinton and Jaxson; and two step-great-grandsons, Damien and Edrian.

She was predeceased by her daughter, Rosemary Mioduszewski, March 12, 2012.

A calling hour was held Friday, Aug. 19, at the Woyasz & Son Funeral Home, 141 Central Ave., Norwich, followed by a Funeral Mass that morning at Sacred Heart Church in Taftville. Burial was at St. Joseph Cemetery.

Hebron

Ramon Douglas Campbell

Ramon Douglas Campbell, 88, of Hebron, passed away Tuesday, Aug. 23, and is finally reunited with the love of his life, Ida. He was born in Malden, Mass., March 23, 1928, to Chesley Campbell and Isabelle (Maltais) Campbell.



They moved to Hartford when he was young, although he spent summers with his grandparents in New Hampshire and one of his first jobs was at Clark's Trading Post. He worked for the highway department for the State of Connecticut before settling into his job as precision grinder at Cushman Industries in Hartford, where he worked until his retirement.

Although dropping out of school to join the U.S. Navy, he was a lifelong learner, with a love of reading. Whether it was new math or Bible studies when his children were young, sign language and Spanish to better communicate with co-workers, radio and television repair and, later in life, "computers for dummies," he was constantly reading and learning.

He was treasurer of his credit union and for many years an active member of the Hebron Lions Club. He held many positions from president to historian and received many awards and plaques he proudly hung on his wall. He met Ida Pinney on a blind date. They were married Nov. 6, 1948, when he was 20 and would have celebrated their 61st wedding anniversary when she passed away in September 2009. Being the father of four daughters, he was a champion of Title IX before it had a title! Always encouraging his girls, telling them they could do anything and to try everything.

He leaves to miss him dearly four daughters, Sandra Campbell Lavigne and husband Rick Nowisch of Coventry, Barbara Campbell of South Windsor, Wanda Campbell and John Gregory of Manchester and Carla Campbell of East Hartford; three granddaughters, Dawn Lavigne of Stafford Springs, Jesse Lavigne and Chris Bennett of Mansfield and Michelle Vibberts of East Granby. Also missing him will be his special bright lights, his eight great-grandchildren, John and Jake Read, Katlyn Sutton, Stephanie, Julie, and Casey Milnes and Elizabeth and Evan Bennett. He also leaves many nieces and nephews and two dear nieces who made it possible for him to stay in his home, April Hescoock and Beverly Sparks. April, you were his angel and gave him these last 2 years in his home, where he wanted to be most. We'd also like to thank neighbors Mike and Shannon Fortin for always keeping an eye on things and for helping with the yard.

He was predeceased by his beloved Ida, grandson, Michael Vibberts and brother, Clarence Campbell.

Family and friends are invited to attend memorial calling hours Saturday, Aug. 27, from 2-5 p.m., at the Holmes Funeral Home, 400 Main St., Manchester. Burial will be private.

Family suggests memorial contributions in memory of Ramon may be made to a charity of the donor's choice.

To leave a message of condolence, visit holmes-watkinsfuneralhomes.com.

Amston

Mary Bailey

Mary Bailey, born June 21, 1919, died at home beside Amston Lake Friday, Aug. 19.

A proud, strong and independent wife and mother, she was predeceased by her husband, Clark L. Bailey. She leaves her three children Lois, Russ and Scot and three granddaughters.

The family would like to thank the staff of Comfort Keepers for their skilled and compassionate care provided over the last year.

There are no services and burial will be at the convenience of the family.

Amston

Charles Thomas Schreier

Charles Thomas Schreier, 79, of Wallingford, passed away Sunday, Aug. 21, at Masonicare Health Center in Wallingford. Born in Middletown, he was the son of the late Bela and Clara (Thornton) Schreier.



Charles was a long-time resident of Amston, also living in East Hampton and Middletown before residing at Masonicare in Wallingford. He graduated Windham High School in 1955 and attended the UConn agricultural program. He worked at Pratt & Whitney for nine years and then on the family dairy farm in Hebron with his father for many years, raising and showing prize Guernsey cows at agricultural fairs.

Charles was a member of First Church of Christ in Wethersfield, was active in the 4H club organization, and was the International Farm Youth delegate to New Zealand for six months and enjoyed showing his slides of his travels to various groups. He attended an agricultural forum in London, England. He was a member of the Hebron Grange, a fifty-five year member of the Masons Wooster Lodge No.10 in Colchester and a member of Order of the Eastern Star.

Charles is survived by three sons, Scott Schreier (Rachel) of Nashville, Tenn., Todd Schreier (Jennifer) of Griswold and Kevin Schreier (Gretchen) of Sarasota, Fla.; two grandchildren, Jakob Schreier and Kaleb Schreier; his sister and brother-in-law, Betty and Charles Konefal of Middletown; a niece, Melissa Konefal, and three nephews, William and Christopher Schreier and Timothy Konefal.

Along with his parents, he was predeceased by his brother and sister-in-law, Bela, Jr. and Joyce Schreier.

A funeral service will be held Saturday, Aug. 27, at 2 p.m., at Masonicare Chapel, 22 Masonic Ave., Wallingford. Burial will be at the convenience of the family.

In lieu of flowers, donations in Charles' memory may be made to Masonic Charity Foundation, P.O. Box 70, Wallingford, CT 06492, Masonicare, 22 Masonic Ave., Wallingford, CT 06492 or the American Diabetes Association, 2080 Silas Deane Highway, 2nd Floor, Rocky Hill, CT 06067.

To share memories or send condolences to the Schreier family, visit doolittlefuneralservice.com.

Colchester

Gail Ann Morse

Gail Ann Morse, 69, of Colchester, passed away Saturday, Aug. 20. She was born May 1, 1947 in Springfield, Mass., the daughter of the late Bernard and Edith Ewig. She was a member of the Moose Club and the Colchester Senior Center.



Gail was involved with My Brother's Keeper (a church charity that makes sleeping bags for the homeless) and knitting dish cloths for the Lebanon Senior Center. In her free time, she often went to bingo and Wii bowling with her friends.

She is survived by her son, Daniel Wilfred Morse; her nieces, Shelly, Shelby and Madisen Jacobs; her step-son, Gary Morse; her brother, Bernard Ewig Jr of New Hampshire; sister, Eleanor Sawchyn of Connecticut; and many nieces and nephews.

Besides her parents, she was predeceased by her brothers, Charles Ewig and Paul Ewig and her ex-husband, Donald Morse.

Relatives and friends may join the family Sunday, Aug. 28, from 3-5 p.m., at the Burke-Fortin Funeral Home, 76 Prospect St., Rockville, CT 06066. A graveside service will be held at Hillcrest Cemetery, Springfield, Mass., Monday, Aug. 29, at 11 a.m.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Town Of Vernon Volunteer Fire Association.

For online condolences, visit pietrasfuneralhome.com.

Marlborough

Henry Warland Kinghorn

Henry (Harry) Warland Kinghorn of Marlborough, loving and devoted husband of the late Mabel Fuller Kinghorn, passed away Saturday, Aug. 20. He was the son of Henry and Mary (Warland) Kinghorn, born in Bridgeport on 9-19-1919.

He cherished his children and sadly was predeceased by his son Glenn. He leaves his daughter Bonnie and her husband Paul Anderson, with whom he made his home, and his son Bruce Kinghorn. He was the proud and much loved Gramps to his grandchildren and great-grandchildren, Kenneth (Robin) Anderson and their children Tyler and Lindsey; Michael (Jennifer) Kinghorn and their daughter Zoe; Robert (Danielle) Kinghorn and their children Josephine and Lucille; Brian (Jennifer) Anderson and their children Katelynn, Leann, Hunter and Courtney; John (Bobbi Jo) Kinghorn and their daughter, Paige; Jim (Jocelyn) Kinghorn and Erin Kinghorn. He also leaves his daughter-in-law Martha Kinghorn, nephew Raymond Herb, his sister-in-law and brother-in law Edith and Bernard McMaster, sister-in-law Arline Fuller and many loved great nieces and nephews.

Harry was a proud U.S. Navy veteran of World War II, serving in the Solomon Islands for 17 months and finishing his tour stationed in Patuxent, Md., where he received his honorable discharge in 1945. He not only belonged to many organizations, but he believed if you belong you should serve and that he did. He was a life member of the MVFD, a 70-year member of VFW Post 5095, American Legion Post 95, charter member of Marlborough Grange, Marlborough Congregational Church, Anchor Lodge No. 112 AF&AM, Valley of Norwich, Hartford, Sphinx Temple, where he was past captain of Sphinx Motor Patrol, Araba Temple, and Legion of Honor of Araba, Ft. Myers, past president of Bonita Shrine Club, member Hi-12 in Bonita; Order of Quetzalcoat; US Coast Guard Auxiliary search and rescue team.

He served as selectman for the Town of Marlborough. He was very proud to be the founder of Troop 39 and its first scoutmaster in Marlborough. He also founded the Marlborough 4-H Dairy Club, the Marlborough Fife and Drum, was a Sunday school teacher, and a little league and Babe Ruth baseball coach. He had a passion for playing drums and entertained many at local shows and charity events. He was a private pilot and enjoyed taking family and friends on trips. He and Toot enjoyed traveling via their plane or motorhome.

Harry was also predeceased by his very much loved stepmom, Mary Burns Kinghorn, his sister and brother-in-law, Elizabeth and Leo Herb, his daughters-in-law Nancy (Luther) and Janet (Boker), his nephew Leo and nieces Dorothy and Betty.

Our family would like to sincerely thank the Hartford HealthCare at Home hospice team, especially Holly, and Suzanne, for their wonderful care and dedication to both our parents during their illnesses. In lieu of flowers, those who wish may make donations to the Shriners Hospitals for Children - Springfield, Development Office, 516 Crew Street, Springfield, MA 01104.

A celebration of Harry's life will be held at the Marlborough Congregational Church, 35 S. Main St, Marlborough, on Saturday, Sept. 10, at 11 a.m.

National Cremation Service is assisting the family with the services.

Colchester

Barbara A. Jones

Barbara A. Jones, 51, of Lebanon, formerly of Norwich and Colchester, passed away Thursday, Aug. 18, at The William W. Backus Hospital in Norwich. Born Dec. 16, 1964, in Milford, she was a daughter of the late Robert Hasselman and Gloria (Wise) Hasselman of Florida.

Barbara married William Taylor Jones in November 1981, then moved to Norwich where they made their home and raised their family.

Burial will be held at the convenience of the family.

The Aurora-McCarthy Funeral Home of Colchester has been entrusted with these arrangements.